



## A strategic approach to prevention of musculoskeletal disorders

**Seim, Rikke; Edwards, Kasper; Poulsen, Signe**

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# **A strategic approach to prevention of musculoskeletal disorders**

**Rikke Seim, Kasper Edwards & Signe Poulsen**

*Technical University of Denmark, Department of Management Engineering*

*Email of presenting author: seim@dtu.dk*

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are a common designation for pain, stiffness or tenderness in the joints, ligaments, tendons, muscles or bones and the associated cardiovascular and nervous system often resulting in symptoms as swelling, restriction of motion and functional impairment. MSD is a serious and comprehensive work environment problem, and in the Danish National Work Environment Strategy 2020 MSD is ranked as one of three main focus areas with the aim of reducing the number of MSD incidents with 20 %.

Employees in the health care sector are especially prone to develop MSDs do to the high level of manual labor for instance the physical handling of patients. The sector work environment council for the social and health care sector (BAR SOSU) has joint forces with researchers at the Department of Management Engineering with the aim of developing a set of tools to strategic prevent MSDs in municipalities. The research project is design to take place in eight steps: 1) Baseline: Identify the strategic action towards prevention of MSDs in all Danish municipalities using telephone survey, 2) Qualitative research interviews: Interviews with representatives from both employees and management in three municipalities, 3) Development of strategic tool to prevent MSDs: Based on the first two steps a strategic tool is develop in contact with BAR SOSU, 4) User test: The tool developed in step 3 is tested and further developed in a pilot municipality, 5) MSD risk assessment: Collection of ideas for possible method of identifying MSD-risk, 6) Implementation and assessment: Tools developed in the previous steps are implemented and tested in the pilot municipality, 7) Evaluation: evaluation of the individual steps and the developed tools effect on MSD incidents in the pilot municipality, 8) Dissemination: presentation and publication of results to Danish municipalities via BAR SOSU.